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13CV9116

**FILED**

MAY 25 2016

JUDGE JOHN Z. LEE  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

To: Judge John Z. Lee

219 South Dearborn Street

Chicago, IL 60604

From: Alicia Ahern

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Dear Judge Lee, I am writing to you as the wife of the plaintiff, Dan Ahern, in the NCAA Student Athlete Concussion Injury Litigation. I received notice that the case is to be settled in August and I would like to present the "soft side" of the concussion case.

My husband, due to football injuries sustained in playing ball for NC State University, under the coaching of Lou Holtz, has been unable to work since age 49. He is now 62. The financial burden placed upon our family, as well as the emotional turmoil and hurt, is not something that can be compensated for by money.

My husband had a career he loved as a hospital administrator and was known in our Florida community as an energetic, robust personality who would go to the limit in getting the job done, no matter the task. In his early forties, those abilities began to decline. By age 49, the havoc wreaked on his body by his football experience began to interfere with his ability to work and to engage socially.

In the subsequent 13 years he has had, in addition to neurological issues, which we believe are the result of multiple concussions, 14 surgeries attempting to address organic injuries...fused ankle, back surgeries, knee surgery, etc. In the past month he has lost his ability to walk any distance and has collapsed three times when his legs gave out from under him.

The financial and emotional cost is dramatic. Not only was his middle age robbed, but financially we are ruined, even with good health insurance. I will have to work, literally, forever, to support his needs. Our health care out of pocket costs average about \$30,000 a year.

I know this case is not about personal injury, but I feel that these broken athletes have been used and tossed aside. My husband played for a team that went to a Bowl Game every year, due to their performance. They were ACC Champs, their stadium was paid off during his tenure with proceeds from

television receipts. The boys who played the game and made this possible were rewarded with a public education and nothing more.

Who represents me as a wife, paying for all the injuries he sustained? Who represents my children and grandchildren, who lost a Father and Grandad who is unable to function normally? Who shares the depth of depression and sadness and anger at a lost life that he navigates on a daily basis?

Something must be done to help these boys. My husband is not alone..he has teammates with destroyed bodies and lives all to the holy grail of football.

I know this case is about medical monitoring, but please be an advocate to move the NCAA to provide medical care and funding so that these aging athletes, who gave their hearts to their teams are not abandoned to pain and suffering. With all the money made in college football, surely some can be set aside to help these individuals.

Personally, I would like to see the sport banned....nothing good comes of bad hits every Saturday in the Fall, except the gross amounts of revenue made by coaches and universities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alicia K. Ahern', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alicia K. Ahern

Cc Magistrate Judge Geraldine Soat Brown